

IN THE CLAIMS

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Please cancel claims 10-18 and 28-31 without prejudice to consideration in a continuing application. Please add claims 32-40 as follows:

sub  
§ 1

32. (New) An apparatus, comprising:

a wafer including a substrate; and

a layer of a nanoporous material deposited on the substrate, the layer including a low density portion closer to the substrate than a high density portion, the high density portion being a densified form of the low density portion.

C1

33. (New) The apparatus of claim 32, further comprising a cap layer deposited on the high density portion, the cap layer including an oxide-based material.

34. (New) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the cap layer includes a Plasma Enhanced Chemical Vapor Deposition (PECVD) oxide layer.

35. (New) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the low density portion of the layer is in contact with the substrate.

36. (New) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the layer is comprised of silicon dioxide.

37. (New) the apparatus of claim 32, further comprising:

a deposition chamber, the wafer being positioned in the deposition chamber; and

a plasma generator operable to generate a plasma within the deposition chamber to provide the densified form of the low density portion of the layer.

*Amald  
JL*  
38. (New) The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the plasma generator includes means for generating a high density plasma stream of Argon ions.

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cont.*  
39. (New) The apparatus of claim 37, further comprising a processor and memory operatively coupled to the plasma generator to control the plasma generator.

40. (New) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the plasma generator includes means for generating a high density plasma stream of Argon ions.

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